CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A method of responding to a route planning service request initiated from a mobile station, the mobile station being located at a mobile station position, the route-planning service request defining an identifying-parameter, the method comprising, in combination:

identifying the mobile station position based on the identifying-parameter;

receiving a destination telephone number;

identifying a destination position corresponding to the destination telephone number;

obtaining a route plan for travel from the mobile station position to the destination position; and

conveying the route plan for receipt by a person.

2. A method of responding to a route planning service request initiated from a mobile station, the mobile station being located at a mobile station position, the route-planning service request defining an identifying-parameter, the method comprising, in combination:

identifying the mobile station position based on the identifying-parameter;

receiving a destination telephone number;

identifying a destination position corresponding to the destination telephone number;

generating a route plan for travel from the mobile station position to the destination position; and

conveying the route plan for receipt by a person.

3. A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the mobile station comprises a device selected from the group consisting of a wireless telephone, a personal digital assistant, a pager, and a personal computer.

4. A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the identifying-parameter comprises a code uniquely identifying the mobile station.

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5. A method as claimed in claim 4, wherein the identifying-parameter comprises an IP address.

6. A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the identifying-parameter comprises a code uniquely identifying the route planning service request.

7. A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the identifying-parameter comprises a code identifying a communication session in which the mobile station requests the route plan.

8. A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein identifying the mobile station position based on the identifying-parameter comprises (i) a mobile positioning system determining the position of the mobile station, and (ii) a machine querying the mobile positioning system by a query keyed to the identifying-parameter so as to obtain the mobile station position determined by the mobile positioning system.

9. A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein receiving a destination telephone number comprises receiving the destination telephone number from the person via the mobile station.

10. A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein receiving a destination telephone number comprises (i) a machine engaging in a dialog with the person via a communications link with the mobile station and (ii) the machine receiving the destination telephone number from the person through the dialog.

11. A method as claimed in claim 10, wherein the dialog comprises a data session.

12. A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein engaging in the dialog comprises the mobile station displaying a data form in which the person enters the destination telephone number, and the mobile station conveying the entered destination telephone number to the machine.

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13. A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein conveying the route plan for receipt by a person comprises conveying the route plan to the person via the data session.

14. A method as claimed in claim 10, wherein the dialog comprises a voice session.

15. A method as claimed in claim 14, wherein engaging in the dialog comprises a machine verbally asking the person for the destination telephone number and the person responsively providing the destination telephone number to the machine by a voice-band message.

16. A method as claimed in claim 14, wherein conveying the route plan for receipt by a person comprises conveying the route plan to the person via the data session.

17. A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein identifying a destination position corresponding to the destination telephone number comprises a machine querying a location system for the destination position by a query keyed to the destination telephone number.

18. A method as claimed in claim 17, wherein the destination telephone number is a telephone number of a second mobile station, and the location system comprises a mobile positioning system, whereby the mobile positioning may responsively determine a location of the second mobile station and return the location to the machine as the destination position.

19. A method as claimed in claim 17, wherein the destination telephone number is a landline telephone number, and the location system comprises a landline location system, whereby the landline location system may responsively determine a location corresponding to the landline telephone number and return the location to the machine as the destination position.

20. A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the mobile station position is represented as latitude and longitude information, the method further comprising converting the mobile station position to a street address corresponding to the latitude and longitude.

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21. A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the destination position is represented as latitude and longitude information, the method further comprising converting the destination position to a street address corresponding to the latitude and longitude.

22. A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein generating a route plan for travel from the mobile station position to the destination position comprises applying a routing engine, the routing engine receiving as input the mobile station position and the destination position and providing as output a route plan.

23. A method as claimed in claim 22, wherein applying the routing engine comprises sending a service request to a routing engine.

24. A method as claimed in claim 23, wherein the routing engine comprises a routing engine selected from the group consisting of (a) MapQuest.com, (b) Mapsonus.com, and (c) Mapblast.com.

25. A method as claimed in claim 22, wherein applying the routing engine comprises running a software application programmed to compute a route from a starting position to a destination position.

26. A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein conveying the route plan for receipt by a person comprises conveying the route plan to the person via an IP network connection.

27. A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein conveying the route plan for receipt by a person comprises conveying the route plan to the person via a service selected from the group consisting of voice mail, e-mail and short message service.

28. A method as claimed in claim 27, wherein conveying the route plan for receipt by a person is selected from the group consisting of a human reciting the route plan to the person audibly over a telecommunications connection and a machine reciting the route plan to the person audibly over a telecommunications connection.

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29. A method as claimed in claim 27, wherein conveying the route plan to the person via short message service comprises conveying the route plan in a sequence of short text messages.

30. A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein conveying the route plan for receipt by a person comprises sending the route plan to machine for later retrieval by the person.

31. A method for assisting a mobile station user to get from a current mobile station position to a destination position, the method comprising, in combination:

receiving a route planning service request and responsively initiating a route planning session;

generating a mobile station position inquiry, whereby the mobile station position inquiry may be forwarded to a mobile positioning system to establish the mobile station position;

receiving, in response to the mobile station position inquiry, an indication of the mobile station position,

receiving a destination telephone number;

initiating an inquiry to identify a destination position corresponding to the destination telephone number;

generating a route plan for travel from the mobile station position to the destination position;

conveying the route plan for receipt by the user,

whereby the route plan may assist the user to travel from the mobile station position to the destination position.

32. A method as claimed in claim 31, wherein conveying the route plan for receipt by the user comprises sending the route plan to a machine for later retrieval by the user.

33. In a telecommunications network, a route planning application server for assisting a mobile station user to get from a current mobile station position to a destination position, the route planning application server comprising, in combination:

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a processor;

a data storage medium;

a first set of machine language instructions stored in the data storage medium and executable by the processor for receiving a route planning service request and responsively initiating a route planning session;

a second set of machine language instructions stored in the data storage medium and executable by the processor for providing a mobile station position inquiry and for receiving in response an indication of the mobile station position, whereby the mobile station position inquiry may be forwarded to a mobile positioning system for identification of the mobile station position;

a third set of machine language instructions stored in the data storage medium and executable by the processor for receiving a destination telephone number and for responsively initiating a inquiry to identify a destination position corresponding to the destination telephone number;

a fourth set of machine language instructions stored in the data storage medium and executable by the processor for generating a route plan for travel from the mobile station position to the destination position;

a fifth set of machine language instructions stored in the data storage medium and executable by the processor for providing the route plan for receipt by the user,

whereby the route plan may assist the user to travel from the mobile station position to the destination position.

34. A method comprising:

receiving a route planning request;

receiving a destination telephone number;

determining a mobile station location;

based on the mobile station location and the destination telephone number, establishing a route plan for travel from the mobile station location to a location corresponding to the destination telephone number; and

providing the route plan.

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